

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 10 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
10 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

Allied forces fanning out from Khe Sanh are still reporting only light to moderate contact with the North Vietnamese in the area. Prisoners report that the enemy is suffering from low morale, insufficient food supplies, and heavy casualties caused by B-52 strikes.

Elsewhere, allied spoiling operations have gotten under way in the Saigon area and on the coast near the Demilitarized Zone.

2. Middle East

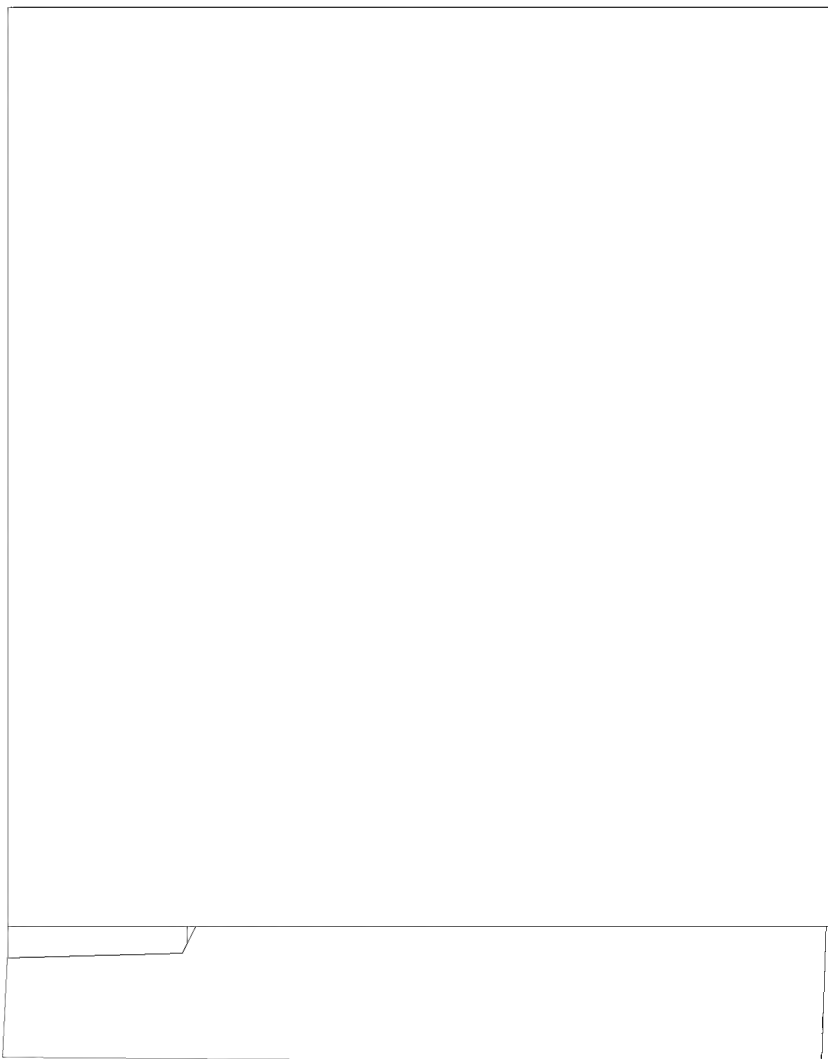
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3. Jarring Mission

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4. Israel-Jordan

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[redacted] there is no sign that things are simmering down. The Israelis are saying publicly that the "hot pursuit" action of two days ago is now the approved tactic for dealing with terrorists. We may therefore see more short, quick border crossings in the future.

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5. South Korea

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6. Philippines

President Marcos, yielding to domestic pressure, is apparently now willing to replace part of the Filipino military engineer contingent in Vietnam with medical personnel. This is in spite of word from Saigon that it needs the engineers more.

Marcos feels he cannot push too hard for retention of the engineers since he has just weathered one political storm: the recent disclosure of Philippine plotting to stir up trouble in Malaysian Borneo. Besides, many Filipinos, including Marcos himself, have said they think the need for a Philippine presence in Vietnam has been lessened by President Johnson's 31 March speech.

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7. USSR-Iran

Although Kosygin's visit to Tehran did not produce anything startling, he made some modest headway in increasing the USSR's respectability in Iran.

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8. USSR

Satellite photography in late March disclosed a missile on a launcher at each of the three completed anti-missile complexes around Moscow. It appears that construction of the complex as a whole is on schedule and will be finished by 1970 or 1971.

9. Ethiopia

Security forces are on the alert for a student riot at the university in Addis Ababa today. The students have long been vociferously critical of Haile Selassie's government, and they are strongly anti-US as well.

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There were disturbances with heavy anti-American overtones just last week.

Faced with the unpalatable alternatives of giving in to the students or cracking down on them, Haile Selassie would almost certainly choose the latter.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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10 ¹⁶ April 1968

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

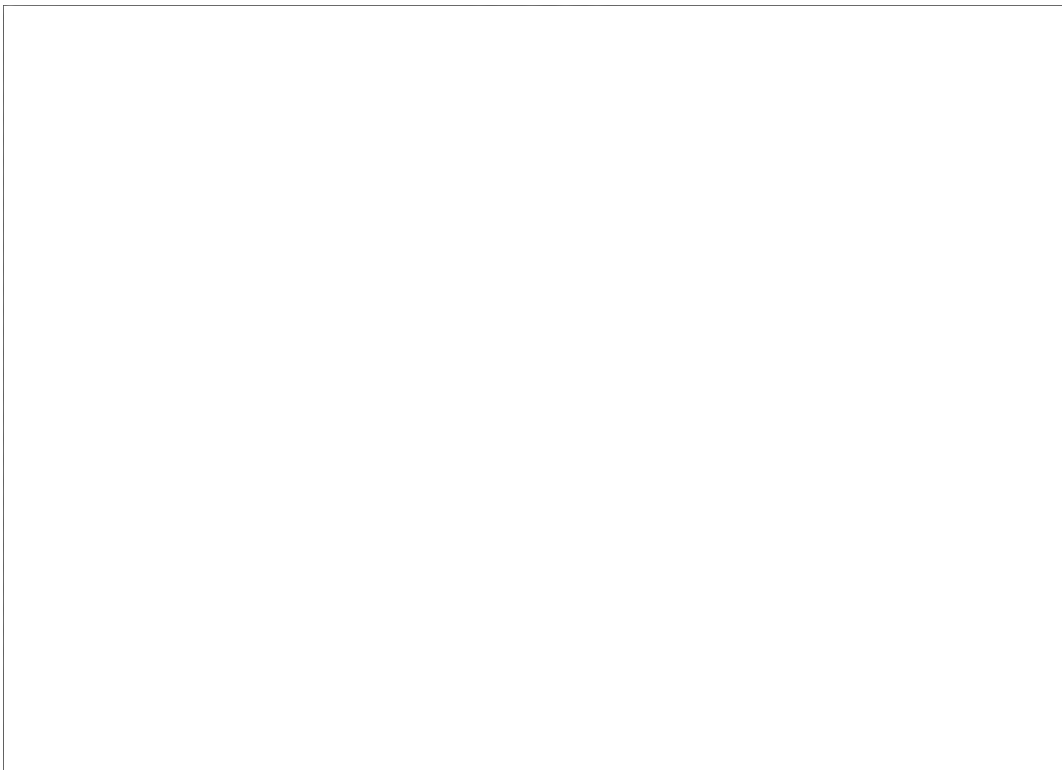
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION



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Tough Line for Vietnamese Audience: Hanoi broadcast an extremely hard editorial on 8 April. The broadcast was for Vietnamese consumption and was taken from a commentary in the Army daily the day before which claimed President Johnson's speech of 31 March was tantamount to an admission of military defeat in South Vietnam.

The bombing limitation was forced on the President by world opinion, the commentary said. It claimed the Tet offensive and General Westmoreland's reassignment as "evidence" the US was near military collapse.

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The commentary also emphasized the fact that Hanoi's terms for a settlement of the war were unchanged--the four points of the North Vietnamese and the political platform of the Liberation Front--and warned that the fighting would continue until these objectives were obtained. It predicted an extremely bitter round of fighting in the future as the war entered a new stage.

This is the harshest Hanoi statement on the war since its offer on 3 April to begin "pretalk talks" with the US. It is almost certainly designed to convince the South Vietnamese Communists that Hanoi is not about to abandon them in the course of contacts with the US. It will also help to steel the people of the North for continuing heavy burdens.

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More on Bombing: Hanoi propaganda is continuing to portray US bombings in the area south of the 20th parallel as particularly intensive and inhumane. On 8 April, in an international English language broadcast, Hanoi claimed a raid on a Catholic hamlet on 4 April had killed or injured many people, including a 60-year-old woman and a day-old child.

Broadcasts such as this are part of the effort to demonstrate that the US is still harboring "aggressive designs" and not really curbing its military activity. Hanoi evidently believes such commentary places additional pressure on the US for a full end to the bombing.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Pham Van Dong Gives Interviews: Premier Pham Van Dong has given a series of interviews to non-Communist correspondents recently in an effort to reach large Free World audiences. The texts of these

interviews are not yet available, but, in addition to Charles Collingwood, Japanese, Latin American, and French journalists all claim to have interviewed the Premier in the past few days. On 8 April Hanoi broadcast a part of the conversations with Collingwood, but only that part which appealed to the American people to support a US troop withdrawal from Vietnam. With that exception, Hanoi has not yet broadcast any of these interviews, presumably to give the correspondents a chance to get their stories filed first.

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